

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE

January 21, 2022

9:04 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Roger Holland, Chair
Senator Gary Stevens, Vice Chair
Senator Shelley Hughes
Senator Peter Micciche
Senator Tom Begich

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 53 (MLV) AM (EFD ADD)

"An Act relating to residency requirements for public school enrollment for certain children of active duty military and National Guard members; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 19 (EDC)

"An Act relating to instruction in a language other than English; and establishing limited language immersion teacher certificates."

- HEARD & HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 53

SHORT TITLE: MILITARY CHILDREN SCHOOL RESIDENCY WAIVER

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) MCCARTY

| | | |
|----------|-----|---------------------------------|
| 02/18/21 | (H) | PREFILE RELEASED 1/8/21 |
| 02/18/21 | (H) | READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS |
| 02/18/21 | (H) | MLV, EDC |
| 03/04/21 | (H) | MLV AT 1:00 PM GRUENBERG 120 |
| 03/04/21 | (H) | Heard & Held |
| 03/04/21 | (H) | MINUTE (MLV) |

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|----------|-----|--|
| 03/09/21 | (H) | MLV AT 1:00 PM GRUENBERG 120 |
| 03/09/21 | (H) | Moved CSHB 53(MLV) Out of Committee |
| 03/09/21 | (H) | MINUTE(MLV) |
| 03/10/21 | (H) | MLV RPT CS(MLV) 6DP |
| 03/10/21 | (H) | DP: CLAMAN, TARR, SHAW, STORY, NELSON, TUCK |
| 04/28/21 | (H) | EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106 |
| 04/28/21 | (H) | Heard & Held |
| 04/28/21 | (H) | MINUTE(EDC) |
| 05/03/21 | (H) | EDC RPT CS(MLV) 4DP 1NR |
| 05/03/21 | (H) | DP: CRONK, GILLHAM, STORY, DRUMMOND |
| 05/03/21 | (H) | NR: ZULKOSKY |
| 05/03/21 | (H) | EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106 |
| 05/03/21 | (H) | Moved CSHB 53(MLV) Out of Committee |
| 05/03/21 | (H) | MINUTE(EDC) |
| 05/12/21 | (H) | DIVIDE AM NO 3 UC |
| 05/12/21 | (H) | TRANSMITTED TO (S) |
| 05/12/21 | (H) | VERSION: CSHB 53(MLV) AM(EFD ADD) |
| 05/14/21 | (S) | READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS |
| 05/14/21 | (S) | EDC |
| 01/21/22 | (S) | EDC AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205 |

BILL: HB 19

SHORT TITLE: LIMITED TEACHER CERTIFICATES; LANGUAGES

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) KREISS-TOMKINS

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| 02/18/21 | (H) | PREFILE RELEASED 1/8/21 |
| 02/18/21 | (H) | READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS |
| 02/18/21 | (H) | EDC, L&C |
| 04/09/21 | (H) | EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106 |
| 04/09/21 | (H) | Heard & Held |
| 04/09/21 | (H) | MINUTE(EDC) |
| 04/12/21 | (H) | FIN REPLACES L&C REFERRAL |
| 04/12/21 | (H) | BILL REPRINTED |
| 04/12/21 | (H) | EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106 |
| 04/12/21 | (H) | Heard & Held |
| 04/12/21 | (H) | MINUTE(EDC) |
| 04/14/21 | (H) | EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106 |
| 04/14/21 | (H) | <Bill Hearing Canceled> |
| 04/16/21 | (H) | EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106 |
| 04/16/21 | (H) | Moved CSHB 19(EDC) Out of Committee |
| 04/16/21 | (H) | MINUTE(EDC) |
| 04/19/21 | (H) | EDC RPT CS(EDC) 5DP 2NR |
| 04/19/21 | (H) | DP: ZULKOSKY, CRONK, PRAX, STORY, DRUMMOND |
| 04/19/21 | (H) | NR: HOPKINS, GILLHAM |
| 05/03/21 | (H) | FIN AT 1:30 PM ADAMS 519 |

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| 05/03/21 | (H) | Heard & Held |
| 05/03/21 | (H) | MINUTE(FIN) |
| 05/06/21 | (H) | FIN AT 1:30 PM ADAMS 519 |
| 05/06/21 | (H) | Moved CSHB 19(EDC) Out of Committee |
| 05/06/21 | (H) | MINUTE(FIN) |
| 05/07/21 | (H) | FIN RPT CS(EDC) 5DP 4NR |
| 05/07/21 | (H) | DP: EDGMON, LEBON, CARPENTER, THOMPSON, MERRICK |
| 05/07/21 | (H) | NR: RASMUSSEN, JOSEPHSON, WOOL, ORTIZ |
| 05/14/21 | (H) | TRANSMITTED TO (S) |
| 05/14/21 | (H) | VERSION: CSHB 19(EDC) |
| 05/17/21 | (S) | READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS |
| 05/17/21 | (S) | EDC, L&C, FIN |
| 01/21/22 | (S) | EDC AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205 |

WITNESS REGISTER

REPRESENTATIVE KEN MCCARTY
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Sponsor of HB 53.

TAMMIE PERREAULT, Northwest Regional Liaison
U.S. Department of Defense
Lewis McCord Air Force Base, Washington

POSITION STATEMENT: Invited to testify on HB 53.

REPRESENTATIVE JONATHAN KREISS-TOMKINS
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Sponsor of HB 19.

BRANDON LOCKE, Director
World Languages and Immersion Programs
Anchorage School District
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 19.

SONDRA MEREDITH, Teacher Certification Administrator
Department of Education and Early Development (DEED)
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions and provided information on HB 19.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[9:04:22 AM](#)

CHAIR ROGER HOLLAND called the Senate Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Begich, Hughes, and Chair Wilson. Senator Stevens and Micciche arrived shortly thereafter.

HB 53-MILITARY CHILDREN SCHOOL RESIDENCY WAIVER

[9:05:23 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND announced the consideration of CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 53(MLV) am(efd add) "An Act relating to residency requirements for public school enrollment for certain children of active duty military and National Guard members; and providing for an effective date."

[9:05:42 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KEN MCCARTY, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, introduced himself.

[9:06:03 AM](#)

At ease

[9:06:38 AM](#)

SENATOR HOLLAND reconvened the meeting.

[9:06:51 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY paraphrased the sponsor statement:
[Original punctuation provided.]

House Bill 53 seeks to allow military children with residency outside of the state, but with documentation of a pending military relocation to the state, access to preliminary registration, enrollment, or application to a school district at the time that the process is open to the general student population. Proof of residency is temporarily waived until the student begins school. Once the student begins school their parent or guardian has ten (10) days to provide proof of residency in the school district.

This is important to military school children, especially those in high school. Often classes are filled during the preliminary registration of the students already registered in that school district. For military students who are high school juniors or seniors, and are transferring to a new school district, they may need to take a specific class to complete their requirements. This bill is also

important to those students wishing to attend a Charter School through lottery or otherwise, as these schools often fill up quickly and there are deadlines for entering the lottery.

9:07:55 AM

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY provided the sectional analysis for HB 53.

Section 1 addresses children coming to the state with their guardian and the definition of a guardian as given in statute. It also defines military installation as it pertains to students moving to Alaska.

Section 2 provides the effective date of HB 53 as its date of passage.

CHAIR HOLLAND explained that PCS is an acronym for permanent change of station.

9:08:46 AM

CHAIR HOLLAND acknowledged Senator Stevens joined the meeting.

9:09:20 AM

TAMMIE PERREAULT, Northwest Regional Liaison, U.S. Department of Defense, Lewis McCord Air Force Base, Washington, stated that HB 53 would allow Alaska to join thirty-two other states in offering early enrollment for the children of military families. The Department of Defense (DOD) supports the policy. Approximately 185,000 U.S. military children move between schools annually. Moves usually occur during the summer, making it easy to miss registration and other school-related deadlines. Late registration impacts course selection, resulting in late graduation or needing to attend summer school. There are 10,000 active-duty military school-age children in Alaska. The intent of HB 53 is to provide military students with the same timely access to programs and courses as their in-state peers. HB 53 does not require the development of new online systems, and it helps schools project student enrollment.

9:11:34 AM

SENATOR MICCICHE joined the meeting.

9:11:41 AM

SENATOR BEGICH asked if HB 53 would affect other state programs with residency requirements, such as the permanent fund dividend.

[9:12:15 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY responded there would be no impact to agencies that have residency requirements because a family must be physically present in the state for residency. HB 53 only permits students to enroll in classes.

[9:12:32 AM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS asked for a formal response from the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend Division.

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY stated he would follow up with the request.

[9:13:18 AM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES asked if HB 53 would make it possible to double count students. For example, would a child at Eielson Air Force Base who relocates to Elmendorf Air Force Base be counted twice.

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY responded that out-of-state students who come to Alaska are not double-counted, and therefore it would not be an issue for students who transfer in-state.

SENATOR HUGHES requested a formal response from the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED).

[9:15:05 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND held HB 53 in committee.

HB 19-LIMITED TEACHER CERTIFICATES; LANGUAGES

[9:15:43 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND announced the consideration of CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 19(EDC) "An Act relating to instruction in a language other than English; and establishing limited language immersion teacher certificates." He acknowledged that Sondra Meredith from the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) was available online to answer questions.

[9:16:10 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE JONATHAN KREISS-TOMKINS, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, introduced HB 19 by speaking to the sponsor statement that read as follows:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Language immersion education is an increasingly popular educational model that also produces impressive academic outcomes. In an immersion program, some of the academic subject matter is delivered in a language other than English. HB 19 provides needed flexibility to school districts operating language immersion programs.

HB 19 gives the State Board of Education and Early Development the tools necessary to tackle one of the biggest challenges facing Alaska's immersion programs: finding fully certified teachers also fluent in an Alaska Native or foreign language. Under HB 19, the state board could provide school districts case-by-case flexibility to hire language immersion teachers they know are qualified to lead a classroom but who – for reasons such as limited English proficiency, advanced age, or familial responsibilities – are unable at the time to get a full teacher certification. To do so, the state board would have to create a new certificate along the lines of the existing "Type M" or "Type I" limited certificates.

Alaska already has a variety of successful and popular immersion programs, including Wasilla's Fronteras Spanish Immersion Program, Anchorage's Rilke Schule German School of Arts and Sciences, and Anchorage School District's highly regarded World Languages and Immersion Program.

Immersion is also central to Alaska Native language revitalization efforts. In Israel, New Zealand, and Hawaii, immersion education was at the core of indigenous language revival. At Ayaprun Elitnaurvik in Bethel, instruction is done in Yup'ik, and interest in Alaska Native language immersion education is growing elsewhere in the state.

HB 19 will help Alaska's language immersion programs continue to provide high-quality dual-language education.

9:18:39 AM

REPRESENTATIVE KREISS-TOMKINS stated that the process for a school's immersion program to obtain a language instructor entails a vote of approval by the school board before requesting a limited language immersion teacher certificate from the State

Board of Education and Early Development. Language immersion programs are increasing in popularity in the Anchorage area and produce students fluent in world languages with impressive academic performance by seventh grade. Past testimony from Jennifer Schmidt-Hutchins, a school administrator for Fronteras Spanish Immersion Charter School in the Mat-Su Borough School District, expounded on the difficulties of operating an immersion language program in Alaska. HB 19 was crafted to provide a solution to practitioners' problems.

9:20:54 AM

REPRESENTATIVE KREISS-TOMKINS stated the sectional analysis for HB 19 includes the following:

Section 1 has a title change that gives the department the elective authority to issue a limited language immersion teacher certificate.

Subsection(b) sets the criteria for an applicant to be certified. An applicant must meet the minimum requisite instructional skills and subject matter expertise to assure the public that the person is competent as a teacher.

REPRESENTATIVE KREISS-TOMKINS noted that the State Board of Education and Early Development was given the regulation-making authority to govern and administer the certificates. It is important to provide the agency with that discretion from a legislative perspective instead of writing it into statute.

Subsection(c) provides that the department may issue a limited language immersion teacher certificate but that a district's school board must be an accenting party to the certificate. Local support from the school board and superintendent is a vital aspect of the process as it establishes accountability.

Subsection(d) gives authorization for promulgating regulations to the State Board of Education and Early Development.

Subsection(e) establishes the initial validity of the immersion teacher certificate as one year with a renewal process that will be regulated and administered by the agency.

9:24:32 AM

SENATOR BEGICH referred to subsection(b), page 1, lines 13-15, and asked how competence and teaching skills are demonstrated by applicants.

REPRESENTATIVE KREISS-TOMKINS deferred the question to DEED but commented that it is helpful to hear situations that immersion language programs encounter. He recalled a situation where Fronteras Charter School was unable to hire a Colombian certified teacher for its immersion program.

9:27:37 AM

SENATOR BEGICH asked if one-year limited immersion certified teachers are required to be mandatory reporters. He also asked if they would be required to join a school district's professional organization.

SENATOR STEVENS asked what a limited certificate means. He stated it takes many years to become an accredited teacher and wants to be certain that a limited certificate is not a back door to certification.

SENATOR HUGHES asked if there is data to show how well immersion students perform compared to non-immersion students when instructed in their non-native language. She also asked for the typical age range for immersion learning.

9:30:35 AM

REPRESENTATIVE KREISS-TOMKINS stated he would defer to Mr. Locke for data on immersion students' performance. The age range of students in immersion programs begins in the lower grades with a gradual diminution into middle school.

REPRESENTATIVE KREISS-TOMKINS responded that the certificate is limited to one year and the terms of the certificate are set by the Board of Education and Early Development. However, there are some statute limitations. He deferred the topic of mandatory reporting to Ms. Meredith. He stated he would investigate whether limited certificate teachers would be required to join a district's professional organization. He said that immersion language programs must be pragmatic and are hiring long-term substitutes to deliver world languages. HB 19 will change the status quo and assist in getting certified teachers in the classroom.

9:35:29 AM

BRANDON LOCKE, Director of World Languages and Immersion Programs, Anchorage School District, Anchorage, Alaska, stated his credentials and said immersion language programs have existed since the 1960s. Anchorage has had immersion programs since the late 1980s, starting with Japanese and being the first state in the county to offer Russian. The National Security

Agency at Elmendorf Air Force recently sought out three Russian immersion high school students to work with Russian linguists in a work-study program. This has led to a new partnership between the agency and school district.

9:37:14 AM

MR. LOCKE stated Anchorage has 8,000 students enrolled in language study classes. Twenty-six hundred are immersion language students enrolled in one of eight programs. The immersion languages offered are: Japanese, German, French, Spanish (2), Yupik, Chinese, and Russian. He stated that HB 19 would be a saving grace for emergency situations, and superintendent Deena Bishop and the Anchorage School Board endorse it because there is a teacher shortage in Alaska and across the county.

9:39:05 AM

MR. LOCKE said that most available immersion teacher positions are at the elementary school level. These positions are being staffed with long-term substitutes who may not have education degrees. He opined that better education results occur using a 50/50 model of instruction where language arts, reading, writing, and math are taught by the classroom teacher and social studies, science, and world language are taught by the immersion teacher. Science and social studies are rich in vocabulary and topics students discuss daily, making them ideal for immersion learning.

MR. LOCKE stated that he was asked to provide data on immersion teachers' performance in teaching other subjects several years ago. He compared state science assessment scores of immersion students and non-immersion students from the Anchorage School District and found that scores of immersion students were considerably higher. He noted that students were taught science in a world language but were tested in English. He concluded that dedicated time to teaching science will improve science scores and that students make connections when taught in an immersion language.

9:41:54 AM

MR. LOCKE mentioned that immersion teachers are assisted by partner teachers upon their arrival, are vetted, and are often hired after working in another state. It is difficult for Alaska schools to find teachers who are eligible to work in the United States because the federal government requires a state-issued teaching certificate before a candidate can apply for a visa. He explained that asking a foreign teacher to complete a Praxis

test not available in their country makes obtaining certification extremely difficult and is an example of how HB 19 will be of assistance. The one-year certificate would allow for training and evaluation. Immersion teachers would be mandated reporters and eligible for participation in teacher organizations. He mentioned that another hardship for immersion teachers is needing to enroll in teaching programs taught in English while they work. The programs require courses and student teaching that do not benefit an immersion teacher.

9:46:00 AM

SONDRA MEREDITH, Teacher Certification Administrator, Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), Juneau, Alaska, stated Alaska Native Language or Culture, Military Science, and Vocational/Technical are three limited teaching certificates that DEED offers. She foresees immersion certificates having similar qualifications and regulations as other limited certificates, such as letters of recommendation, experience, district evaluations, and portfolios.

9:48:18 AM

SENATOR BEGICH asked if immersion certification would make the teacher a mandatory reporter.

MS. MEREDITH replied yes, language immersion teachers would be mandatory reporters and would be required to complete the training.

REPRESENTATIVE KREISS-TOMKINS stated he appreciated the assistance from Mr. Locke and Ms. Meredith and that he is available to provide any additional information that would be helpful.

9:49:16 AM

CHAIR HOLLAND held HB 19 in committee.

9:49:33 AM

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Holland adjourned the Senate Education Standing Committee meeting at 9:49 a.m.